

REHEARSAL.

1. Whether those words, I will set a King over me, *Deut. xvii. 14.* do Imply the Choice of the King to be in the People?
2. Saul was not Chosen by the People.
3. The Voice of the People was against God. Saul made it his Excuse. Belial Crying for Liberty. Compar'd to Idolatry. To Reign Signifies to Restrain. All Laws are Restraints upon Liberty.
4. The Obligation of Duty to Saul, when he was Chosen.
5. What is Meant by the People being said to Choose their King. shew'd in Solomon. How Particularly he was Chosen. Even before he was Born.

From Saturday December the 1st. to Saturday December the 8th. 1705.

Country-m. **Y**OU have made it Plain to me, Master, That the Peo-

ple of the Jews did Commit a Great Sin, in Asking a King. And therefore, That the Text Urged for the People to Choose their King, that is, *Deut. xvii. 14.* was spoke of this Sin of the Jews; And therefore, in Consequence, is Rather against the Right of the People to Choose their King, as making it Sinsfull.

(1.) But however I wou'd know, whether these words, *When thou shalt say, I will set a King over me,* do's not Imply the Choice of the People? For to this Purpose they are urg'd.

Rehears. When God fore-told this Great Sin of the People, and the Punishment that shou'd follow; He in Judgment Remember'd Mercy. Though He permitted them to Abdicate Himself. Yet He did not totally Forsake them. He wou'd not suffer them to Fall into that Utmost of Confusion, to have the Choice of their Kings left to Themselves. Therefore He Reserv'd that still to Himself. And therefore, by that Expression, *I will set a King over me,* was not meant, That they shou'd Choose their King. For that is Expressly Barr'd in the next words following, *When thou shall say, I will set a King over me— Thou shalt in any wise set him King over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall Choose.*

(2.) Country-m. But how did God Choose their King? Did God Name the Person who shou'd be their King?

Rehears. He did. As you may see in the first Kings He gave them. The first was *Saul.* The People left the Choice to *Samuel.* 1. *Sam. viii. 4, 5.* All the Elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to *Samuel*, unto Ramah, and said unto him— *Make Us a King.* But neither They nor *Samuel* knew who this King shou'd be. Till God himself did Name him. *Chap. ix. 15, 16, 17.* The Lord told *Samuel* in his Ear a Day before *Saul* came, saying, *To morrow about this time I will send thee a Man out of the Land of Benjamin; and thou shalt Anoint him to be Captain over my People Israel— And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, Behold the Man whom I speake to thee of, this same shall Reign over my People.* Accordingly we find *Chap. x.* That *Samuel* did Anoint him. And confirm'd it to *Saul*, (who knew nothing of it himself) by several Signs. And at last, by *Changing the Heart of Saul,* and turning him into another *Man,* and Causing him to *Prophesy,* by the *Spirit of God* coming upon him.

All this while, the People knew nothing of the Matter; nor troubled themselves about the Choice of the King; having left it wholly to *Samuel.*

Country-m. If they Impower'd *Samuel* to Choose for them, it was their Choice still.

Rehears. They did not Impower *Samuel*, but Petition'd him (he was then their Judge) to Give them a King. Which *Samuel* wou'd not do, till God Commanded him. *Chap. viii. 6, 7, 22.* The thing Displeased *Samuel*, when they said, give us a King— And *Samuel* prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto *Samuel*, hearken unto the Voice of the People— for they have not rejected

Thee, but they have rejected Me, that I shou'd not Reign over them. According to all the works which they have done, since the Day that I brought them up out of the Land of Egypt, even unto this Day; wherewith they have Provoked me, and served other Gods; so do they also unto thee. Now therefore Harken unto their Voice, and make them a King.

(3.) Country-m. Here I observe, that the Voice of the People was always against God, still Provoking Him. It was the Voice of *Belial*, rather than of *God!* Of *Belial* crying out for Liberty, and to be Free from the Yoke of that Government which *God* had Plac'd over them!

And that *God* compares this to their Serving of other Gods. As the same *Samuel*, in this same Book, *Chap. xv. 23.* Calls *Rebellion, Witch-Craft and Idolatry.*

And ver. 24. *Saul* pleads the Voice of the People for his Excuse. *Because I feared the People, and Obeyed their Voice.*

And for the word *Reign*, our Margin Reads *Restrain.* As *Chap. ix. 17.* This same shall Reign over my People Israel, it is, This same shall Restrain my People. For *Reigning* is *Restraining,* and so is all *Government* and *Laws*, it is *Restraining of Liberty.* This Provokes the *Rebellious Spirit,* who wou'd be *Belial*, that is, *Free from all Yoke or Restraint.* Which is being *Free from all Government or Laws*, but our own *Will.* And this is the True *Bostom* and *Foundation* of all our *Popular Declamations for Liberty;* and placing the *Original of Power in the People.* The *End of it is, to have no Government at all.* Whether themselves see it, or not. For there is an *Infatuation, and a Blindnes* that is *Judicial.* But it is *Hop'd*, that is not the *Case of All.* And that there are some yet Left, who will *Harken to Reason; to our Laws; to the History of all Ages; and to the Authority of Holy Scripture; or who will be Convinc'd, at least, by their own Experience!*

But I have Interrupted you. You were going on with the *Election of Saul.*

Rehears. After *Saul* was Chosen and Nam'd by *God*, and Anointed by *Samuel*; then *Samuel* Assembl'd the Tribes, not to Choose who shou'd be King, for that they did not; but rather to Declare him unto them. He caus'd them to Present themselves before the Lord, by their Tribes, and by their Thousands. 1. *Sam. x. 19.* And it is said, that such a Tribe, and such a Family was Taken. But how they were Taken is not said, whether by *Lot*, as some suppose, or that *Samuel* told them which *God* had Taken, or how otherwise *God* did Determine it. But it is Certain that it was not by *Votes of the People.* For they knew not *Saul* when he was Taken or Nam'd. He was an Obscure Man, and none of the *Princes of the Tribes.* Nor did they know where to find him. Till God told them where *Saul* had hid himself ver. 22. Then they Ran and fatched him. And *Samuel* said to all the People see *thee him whom the Lord hath Chosen.*

Country-m. It is very Plain that this *Election* was from *God*, and not from the *People.*

(4.) But seeing they Sinned in Asking a King, did they not Sin likewise in Obeying him? Was

not that a going on with their Sin? Ought they not to have *Quit* him, and Repented, and Return back again to their *Theo-Craſe*, and to Samuel who was their Judge under that *Oeconomy*?

Rehears. The *Choice* of the *Person* being from *God*, it gave him *Divine Commission*. He was now the *Chosen of God*, the *Anointed* and *Immediate Representative of God*. Which the *People* cou'd never have made him. Their *Voice* was not the *Voice of God*. *God* alter'd the *Frame* of their *Government* as they *Desir'd*. But when it was *Alter'd*, they cou'd not *Alter* it again. More than they cou'd *Alter* it at first. If they cou'd have *Alter'd* it *Themselves*, they needed not have been so very *Earnest* with *Samuel* to have *Alter'd* it for them, and Bore his several *Repulses* and *Refusal* to do it; till as I said, *God* gave him *Orders* to do it. And then they were *Determin'd*. They cou'd not go *Back* again. And it is very *Observable*, that in this same *Chap. v. 26, 27*. They who *Adher'd* to *Saul*, after he was thus *Chosen*, are said to be those, *Whose Hearts God had Touched*. But the *Children of Belial* said, *How shall this Man Save Us?* And they *Dispised* him. *True Sons of Liberty!* They *Must*, they *Wou'd* have a *King*; and as I may say, even *Forced* *God* to give them one. But as soon as they had him, then, *How shall this Man Save Us?* They were never *Contented*! Nor ever can be, upon that *Foot of Liberty*, and being under no *Yoke*! This is the *Constancy* of the *Voice of the People*! One Day, *Hosannah!* the next is *Cruſcie*! This is the *Sense*, the *Justice*, the *Government* of *Beelzebub's FLIES*! instead of *God* and the *King*, they are for *Belial* and *Beelzebub*, for *Liberty*, and the *Voice of the People*!

Country-m. But how did *Samuel* carry in this *Affair*? Some were for *Saul*, and some against him. And *Samuel* was then *Judge*. He might have *Join'd* with the *Party* that were against *Saul*, and still have *Retain'd* his *Office*, and been the *Chief Governor* himself.

Rehears. He knew that *God* had now *Alter'd* the *Form* of their *Government*. And that he was no longer *Judge*. Therefore he *Immediately Submitted* to *Saul*, and that before all the *People*, as a *Precedent* to them. *Chap. xii. 1. &c.* And *Samuel* said unto all *Israel*, behold I have *Heard* unto your *Voice*— And have made a *King* over you. And now behold, the *King* walketh before you— Behold here I am, *Witness* against me before the *Lord*, and before his *Anointed*; whose *Ox* or *Aſs* have *Itaken*? &c. And when none cou'd *Accuse* him, he said, *The Lord is Witness against you*, and his *Anointed* is *Witness* this day, that ye have not found *Ought* in my *Hand*. You see here, that he *Submitted* himself to be *Judged* by *Saul*, as being then the *LORD's Anointed*, and *Consequently* the *Supreme Judge* over all, even over *Samuel* himself, and also for any *Male-Administrations*, if he had been *Guilty* of any, even before *Saul* was *King*, and while *Samuel* himself was the *Supreme Judge*. And then sure *Saul* was *Judge* of all *Others*. So that his *Government* was *Supreme*, and over all *Caſes* and *Persons*.

And to confirm the *People* in their *Obedience* to *Saul*, tho' they had *Simed* in *Desiring* a *King*, which *Samuel* laid fully before them; yet he adds, *ver. 14.* *If you will Fear the Lord, and serve Him*— *Then shall both ye, and also the King that Reigneth over you continue following the Lord your God*. That is, they were in *GOD's Covenant*, and he wou'd *Bless* them, under this *Kingly Government*.

(5.) *Country-m.* But it is said, *ver. 13.* Behold the *King whom ye have Chosen*. Do's not this make the *People* to have *Chosen*? And that the *Choice* of the *King* was in the *People*?

Rehears. Their *Choosing* there, means no more than their *Desiring* a *King* in the *General*, not their *Choosing* the *Person*, which *God* did. And it

is thus *Explained* in the same *Verse*. Now therefore, Behold the *King whom ye have Chosen*, and whom ye have *Desired*; and behold, the *Lord* hath set a *King* over you.

It is Common in the *Holy Scriptures* as well as other *Writings*, to call that the *Act* or *Choice* of any one, to which they *Consent*; or which they *Desire*, or *Approve* of. It is said *Exod. xxxii. 35.* That the *People* made the *Calf*, which *Aaron* made. Thus it is said, *1. Chr. xxix. 22.* That the *People* *Made* *Solomon King* and *Anointed* him unto the *Lord* to be the *Chief Governor*, and *Zadok* to be *Priest*. Now it is Certain, that it was not the *Office* of the *People* to *Anoint* the *King*, far less to *Anoint* the *Priest*. Nor did they do it. For it is said *Expreſſly*, *1. Kin. 1. 39.* That *Zadok the Priest* took an *Horn of Oyl* out of the *Tabernacles* and *Anointed* *Solomon*. Nor did they *Make Solomon King*, otherwise than by *Rejoycing* at it, and *Adding* their *Acclamations*. For *God* had *Chosen Solomon* to be *King*, even before he was *Born*. As *God* said to *David*, *1 Chr. xxii. 9. &c.* Behold a *Son shall be Born unto thee, who shall be a Man of Rest*— for his *Name shall be Solomon*— *And he shall be my Son, and I will be his Father*; *And I will Establish the Throne of his Kingdom over Israel for ever*. And *Chap. xxiii. 1.* So when *David* was *old*, he made *Solomon* his *Son King over Israel*. And *Chap. xxviii. 1. 4. &c.* David *Assembl'd* all the *Princes of Israel the Princes of the Tribes, &c.* And said, *Hear me, my Brethren, and my People— The Lord God of Israel chose me before all the House of my Father, to be King over Israel forever: For he hath chosen Judah to be the Ruler: And of the House of Judah the House of my Father: And among the Sons of my Father, He liked me to make me King over all Israel: And of all my Sons (for the Lord hath given me many Sons) He hath Chosen Solomon my Son to sit upon the Throne of the Kingdom of the Lord over Israel.* And *Chap xxix. 1.* David the *King said unto all the Congregation, Solomon my Son, Whom alone God hath Chosen, is yet Young, &c.* Then he shew'd 'em *Solomon* for their *King*. And *ver. 20.* David said to all the *Congregation*, *Now Bless the Lord your God. And all the Congregation blessed the Lord God of their Fathers, and Bowed down their Heads, and Worshiped the Lord, and the King. And they Sacrificed Sacrifices unto the Lord— And did Eat and Drink before the Lord on that Day, with Great Gladness; And they Made Solomon the Son of David King the second time, and Anointed him unto the Lord to be the Chief Governor, and Zadok to be Priest— And all the *Princes, and the Mighty Men, and all the Sons likewise of King David, submitted themselves unto Solomon the King.**

This was all the *Meaning* of their being said to *Make* him *King*, and to *Anoint* him. They *Concurr'd Heartily* in it, and *Approv'd* of it. As the *People* are here said to *Sacrifice*. Whereas none cou'd *Sacrifice* but the *Priests*. And it was *Death* for any but the *Priests* to *Approach* unto the *Altar*. *Num. iii. 10, 38. xvi. 40. xviii. 7.* And *God* struck the Great *King Uzziah* with *Leprosy* to his *Death*, for *Attempting* it. Which we do not suppose the *People* here did. Only brought their *Sacrifices* to the *Priests*, to be *Sacrificed* by them, according to the *Law*. Yet in a *General Acceptation*, they are here said to *Sacrifice*.

I have been the Longer upon this, because of the *Arguments* drawn from *Nicety of Expression*; without regard to the *Fault*, which is the *surest Interpretation*, as *Actions are of Words*.

Therefore I have shew'd you the *Fault of Saul's Election*, That it was not by the *People*.

Country-m. It is *Clear* to *Demonstration*. And *Fault* can't *Fail* us. But *Trifling* and *Disputing* about *Words* or *Phrases*, is of little *Weight* or *Certainty*. And is taken up *Generally* by those who have a *Mind* to *Banter*, and *Confound* things, and not to let us see the *Truth*.